



# Using CIRC Method in Teaching Reading at Vocational High School PGRI 2 Kediri

Hero Ingga Syahrial <sup>1</sup>, Dr. Khoiriyah, M.Pd <sup>2</sup>, Mahendra Puji Permana Aji,  
M.Pd <sup>3</sup>

<sup>123</sup> English Education Department  
University of PGRI Kediri

<sup>1</sup>[heroingga68@gmail.com](mailto:heroingga68@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>[khoiriyah@unpkediri.ac.id](mailto:khoiriyah@unpkediri.ac.id)

<sup>3</sup>[mahendrapuji@unpkediri.ac.id](mailto:mahendrapuji@unpkediri.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

*Reading proficiency is a fundamental skill that empowers learners to access information from diverse sources. Thus, selecting and implementing effective learning strategies such as CIRC can significantly influence student outcomes. This study aims to describe the stages of teaching reading using CIRC at vocational high school 2 PGRI kediri. The subject of study was a teacher and students in grade 11 ATPH Vocational High School 2 PGRI Kediri with 30 students. The data was collected by observation and in-depth interviews. Descriptive data implemented the data analysis in a qualitative design. In where the data was found based on observation, and interviews from the field research. The results showed using the CIRC method in Teaching as students enjoy and are active in the learning process in class, increasing student engagement, and building critical thinking to solve problems both individually and in groups. This study was applied to five stages, namely; 1. observing, 2. Questioning, 3. experimenting, 4. Associating, 5. Communicating. So, it can be concluded that it provides valuable insights into the implementation of CIRC and offers recommendations for improving its effectiveness in vocational high school settings.*

**KEYWORDS:** Cooperative Learning, CIRC, Teaching Reading, Reading Comprehension

## INTRODUCTION

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, English has been crucial in advancing science and technology. The whole majority of information in the world is communicated in English. Therefore, it serves as the lingua franca of science and technology, facilitating global collaboration and knowledge-sharing. These necessities that people working in a particular field must be able to dominate English in speech and writing to organize knowledge and information.

Learning English has involved 4 primary and developing skills: speaking, writing, listening, and reading. commonly, The four talents are independent, but when combined for communication, language becomes interdependent and demands a balanced distribution and harmonious implementation. It shows how many various are integrated into one linguistic language aspect. One of the language aspects contained in vocational high school students' PGRI 2 Kediri is reading skills. So, reading is one of the most important skills for students.

Reading is one of the most important skills in English. The ability to analyze, interpret, and comprehend the information of the text. Commonly, it involves the activities to receive and deliver the message based on our interpretation. So, it exerts several activities such as physical or cognitive



action (Suyana 2019: 19). As reading is a visual process of translating written symbols into spoken symbols. When the students less or more on their reading, they read more, and the better they get it (Harmer, 2007:99). So, reading has impactful on the students' academics.

One type of reading skill is reading comprehension. Students must master English skills. According to Bulut (2017:23), reading comprehension involves students actively thinking about and creating meaning from the text during various stages, i.e., pre-reading, while reading, and post-reading. In-Line, (Zimmerman, 2019) stated that Reading comprehension is the ability to grasp the meaning of what you have read. It's about understanding the ideas, information, and messages the text presents According to Haley (2002) understanding the written word, the content can be read, and the reconstruction meaning. It is agreed by Smith and Robinson (1973: 37) that comprehension means understanding. So reading comprehension isn't only pronouncing the words that are found in the text, but understanding the meaning. Reading comprehension is a complex process involving both automatic and strategic cognitive skills. These skills work together to help readers create a mental picture or understanding of the text.

It is not only about the reader's characteristics like knowledge and memory. It also depends on language-related factors like reading skills, decoding ability, vocabulary, understanding text structure, making inferences, and the reader's motivation. Comprehension also requires metacognition and comprehension monitoring. As mature readers in reading comprehension skills, they can transfer an effective transition from learning to read to reading to learn. So, the ability of reading comprehension is needed for students.

Unluckily, there are some difficulties against by students in learning reading. Based on the observation conducted by the researcher at the vocational high school PGRI 2 Kediri, Many students find it challenging and uninteresting to comprehend paragraphs, sentences, and even individual words. This is often due to a lack of regular reading practice. On the other hand, they don't have strong motivation, vocabulary enrichment, decoding automaticity, and fluent reading. They may not understand the effective reading strategies used by skilled readers or the characteristics of different types of text.

Based on the PISA results in 2022, Indonesia has reached the fifth position in literation. This result shows an increase in reading or activities that connect literature and language. However, this result doesn't change the literacy rate in Indonesia from 11th out of 81 countries.

The weakness of the students in reading comprehension is caused by the ineffectiveness of the teaching technique. The teacher should use a reading strategy technique that suits the student's comprehension level, context, and difficulty level in understanding the text, based on the student's experience (Ali & Razali, 2019). Therefore, there are several reading strategy techniques to improve student's reading ability. CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) is the possible solution.

CIRC is a development method from a cooperative learning strategy. Linguistically this method can be defined as a cooperative learning model where students work together to understand and analyze a text, and then synthesize its key points into a concise summary (Fahrurrozi, Edwita dan Bintoro, 2022). This strategy combines cooperative learning with increased reading, writing, and art skills in language (R. E. Slavin, Stevens, & Madden, 1988). Commonly, this strategy combines reading and writing to place students in small, collaborative groups of 4- 6 people with a heterogeneous group structure. The Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) strategy is a comprehensive program for teaching reading and writing skills to students in elementary school and beyond, including high school. CIRC's design is motivated by a desire to incorporate cooperative learning and modern teaching methods to enhance the reading-learning process.

The advantages of using the CIRC learning model promotes holistic development by focusing on cognitive (thinking), psychomotor (physical) and affective (emotional) aspects.

Implementing CIRC can positively influence the learning process, leading to individual behavioral changes and enhanced social skills through collaborative groups.

The usage of the CIRC method has been studied by some researchers. The first research conducted by (Kesumadewi et al.'s) 2020, the CIRC learning model combined with illustrated stories demonstrated a significant positive impact on the Indonesian language proficiency of fifth-grade elementary students. The second research was conducted by (Jayadi: 2021) research showed that the CIRC learning method improved the ability of fourth-grade students at SDN 22 Mataram to identify main sentences in the 2020/2021 school year. Meanwhile, on another research conducted by (Kondoalumang et al.'s 2022) found that the CIRC learning model can improve the academic performance of fifth-grade students at SDN Inpres Hiung in thematic lessons about the ecosystem.

It can be concluded that The CIRC learning strategy emphasizes cooperative learning, where students work together to achieve better results. This approach highlights the importance of teamwork and shared success, rather than focusing solely on individual abilities. Considering the explanation above, researchers are interested in conducting the study entitled "**Using CIRC Method in Teaching Reading at Vocational High School PGRI 2 Kediri**".

According to the above background, the research formulated to be two questions: (1). How is effectively the implementation of CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition) toward student's reading ability at vocational high school 2 PGRI Kediri?

## 1.0 Literature Review

Cooperative learning is one of the learning methods used for students in teaching and learning in the class. Cooperative learning involves the students working together in a group to solve and achieve the goals in a team. this method benefits both the individual student and their group members by enhancing their learning experience. This method divides the students into small groups with different ideas, genders, cultures, traditions, and thoughts to achieve the project together (Ali, 2021; SANDI, 2021). when implemented successfully the students would have reached higher goals than individually. So, cooperative learning is focused on collaboration teams, which involve knowledge to solve problems, creativity, and implementation of the creativity to achieve the result goals of learning (II, 2003; Nugrawiyati, 2017). Cooperative learning also can increase students' interaction, and decrease victimization, stress, emotional problems, bullying, and more. Thus, it creates an active interaction class between the students and the teacher in the teaching and learning process.

Cooperative Learning is characterized by its strong emphasis on group collaboration. Beyond assessing individual learning, it aims to develop students' ability to work together and master the content. In this approach, both group and individual achievements are equally valued in Cooperative Learning (Oktavia, 2015; Sophia et al., n.d.; Suasta, 2016)

It emphasizes the significance of collaboration within small groups. Each member plays a crucial role in assisting one another in achieving the established learning objectives. Group success is a shared responsibility, mandating active participation and contributions from all individuals. Skills such as teamwork, communication, and interpersonal interaction become paramount in this learning process. In essence, Cooperative Learning not only focuses on individual mastery of the subject matter but also on developing students' social and collaborative competencies (Hasanah & Shofiyul himami, 2021).

Meanwhile, collaborative learning is an output of cooperative learning. It is one of the strategies that invite two interaction people, both students and teachers in the learning process. According to Andayani (2015:363), collaborative learning is a method of learning, to gain knowledge acquisition together. So, the students brainstorm with each other, explore the question, and finish the project based on team instruction.

By using learning methods, the teacher can help the students to get ideas, information,



creativity, way of thinking, and idea expression. Another side of the usage of learning methods can be teacher guidance in implementing the materials.

Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) is a development method from a cooperative learning strategy. This strategy combines cooperative learning with increased reading, writing, and art skills in language (R. E. Slavin, Stevens, & Madden, 1988). Commonly, this strategy combines reading and writing to place students in small, collaborative groups of 4- 6 people with a heterogeneous group structure.

CIRC strategy is a comprehensive program for teaching reading and writing skills to students in elementary school and beyond, including high school. CIRC's design is motivated by a desire to incorporate cooperative learning and modern teaching methods to enhance the reading-learning process. (Sani 2019) defined CIRC as a series of student activities that involve understanding the context, finding the message, spelling the words, reading aloud, and presenting the results. Hence, the usage of CIRC can improve students' motivation and their teamwork to understand text comprehension. Another latest research finding, cooperative integrated reading, and composition, or CIRC can increase the engagement between teachers and students in the learning process.

In CIRC method has three component models namely: 1) activities related to stories, 2) direct instruction in reading comprehension, and 3) writing and art unified language.

Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) is a teaching method that encourages students to work collaboratively in groups. Each group member contributes ideas and knowledge to enhance the group's understanding of a concept or task. Through this cooperative process, students develop long-lasting learning experiences. CIRC primarily involves three key elements:

1. Story-related activities: Engaging students with activities based on a specific story.
2. Direct reading comprehension instruction: Providing explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies.
3. Integrated language arts/writing: Combining reading and writing skills in a cohesive learning experience.

This model emphasizes cooperation to enhance both reading and writing skills. Slavin (2005) further elaborates on the core elements of CIRC, including:

- Group reading: Collaborative reading within groups.
- Teamwork: Collaborative efforts among group members.
- Story-related activities: Engaging activities based on the story.
- Pair discussions: Partner-based discussions to deepen understanding.
- Assessments: Formal assessments to measure learning outcomes.
- Direct reading comprehension instruction: Explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies.
- Integrated language arts/writing: Combining reading and writing skills in a cohesive learning experience

### **1.0.1 The Procedure CIRC in Teaching Reading.**

According to Marlina (2019) Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) is a teaching method that combines cooperative learning with reading and writing instruction. It involves several steps:

1. **Teacher Introduction:** The teacher begins by introducing the lesson topic, providing context, and setting clear learning objectives.
2. **Group Formation:** Students are divided into groups, either homogeneous (similar ability levels) or heterogeneous (mixed ability levels).
3. **Skill Instruction:** The teacher provides explicit instruction on reading, writing, and critical thinking skills.
4. **Group Exploration and Discussion:** Students collaborate within their groups to explore the topic,

discuss ideas, and analyze information from various sources.

5. **Group Presentation and Practice:** Groups present their findings or create products to demonstrate their understanding.
6. **Assessment:** The teacher assesses student learning through quizzes, tests, or projects.
7. **Rewards and Recognition:** Positive reinforcement, such as praise or small rewards, is given to motivate students and recognize their efforts.

### 1.0.2 The Advantages of Using CIRC

The implementation of the CIRC method in the learning and teaching process has a positive impact on the students. Saifulloh (in Huda, 2017: 221) highlights several key advantages of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) model:

- 1) **Personalized Learning:** CIRC ensures that learning activities align with students' individual developmental stages, interests, and needs, making education more relevant and engaging.
- 2) **Meaningful Learning:** By connecting classroom activities to real-world situations and personal experiences, CIRC enhances students' understanding and retention of knowledge.
- 3) **Cognitive Development:** CIRC fosters critical thinking, analysis, and problem-solving skills through integrated learning experiences.
- 4) **Social and Emotional Learning:** CIRC promotes collaboration, respect, communication, and tolerance among students, preparing them for future success.
- 5) **Motivational Learning:** CIRC's practical and relevant approach to learning motivates students to actively participate and achieve their full potential.
- 6) **Professional Development:** CIRC challenges teachers to think innovatively and adapt their teaching methods to cater to diverse student needs.

In essence, CIRC offers a holistic approach to teaching reading and writing that not only improves academic outcomes but also nurtures well-rounded individuals.

### 1.0.3 Teaching Reading

In the activity of classroom, teaching reading can also be defined as the activity of transferring knowledge between teacher and students by using a certain technique strategy and certain material to master reading itself. Teaching is a complex activity. It's not only focused on transferring the materials but also giving the information to the students. So, reading is one of the ways to make the students understand in the material. Hamalik Omear (2019:44) stated teaching is to transfer knowledge to the students at school.

Horwad in Ahmad Susanto (2016:20) stated teaching is an activity process to help the students better in the learning process. Those processes consist of guiding, helping, creating, and developing their attitude, ideals, knowledge, and achievement.

Based on Harmer (2007: 23) explained teaching isn't an easy job. Those activities involve patience, strong intention, willingness, and guidance necessary to see the progress of the students. They can feel stressed and bored at the same time, but also worth remembering that it can be extremely enjoyable. Subana and Suhati (2009) explained that the activity of teaching nowadays is guiding the students on how to learn from the material, and not teaching about the material. Meanwhile, Ahmad Susanto (2016:26) explained the role of the teacher is crucial to creating interesting learn for the students in their learning environment

The main purpose of teaching reading is to make the students use their understanding in the text by their comprehension and knowledge.

From the above explanation, it can be concluded that teaching is an activity to transfer knowledge between teacher and student by creating an interactive environment learning process. According to Cunningham, et. al (in Fahimsyah, 2008) explained, there are basic steps in teaching reading to improve student's reading comprehension:

1. Developing the background knowledge to understand the student's comprehension is necessary.
2. Set purpose or goals in reading (identify the information to be searched, Questions to be answered, and predictions to be verified).
3. Have students read the text.
4. Have students shown in some ways ( answering the question, summarizing the materials, and reading



the information aloud) whether they have found the purposes.

5. Give the positive feedback on their comprehension performances

#### 1.0.4 Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is a student's ability to understand the text by using the silent reading technique. According to Tarigan (2008) reading comprehension is a kind of reading that purposing to understand the text. Commonly, those activities are using feeling, emotion, and mind to comprehend the text Kusman Prihatsanti et al., (2018). So, it needs to the ability critical thinking to convey the message to the reader and avoid misunderstanding from the text message. Tarchi (2017), explained that reading comprehension is a reading process to build the concept of understanding in the text.

Meanwhile, Spear-Swerling in Fitria (2019) stated that reading comprehension is one of the kind source texts to comprehending the reading text. Alex dan Achmad (2010) stated that reading comprehension is a self-process to understand the text's meaning, by including our argument to criticize, giving a comment, and analyzing every single word.

Reading can't be separated from comprehension, as the reader has to comprehend what they have read to get a message or information from text or books. According to Widiasworo (2017: 81), comprehension is a process of the mind that collects information, connects the information, and visualizes it.

According to Scanlon et al. (2010:276), comprehension is an activity that involves the active process of constructive comprehension by ultimate understanding knowledge and preexisting knowledge of the text. Meanwhile, Sudaryono (2009:50) explained that comprehension is an activity to remember what we learned. Anas Sudjiono (2011:50) stated that comprehension is the ability of someone to understand and know the information from the information received.

Neufeld (2005:302) explained that comprehension is the process of constructing and supporting understanding of the text. He added that comprehension consists of two features: (1) being actively involved with the text and using appropriate background to interpret the text. It's also supported by the statement Ahuja (2001:10) that comprehension is the product of reconstructing the facts with a curious system. It means the reader will construct by using her or his background knowledge to understand the text.

Based on the explanation above, reading comprehension is a power technique to obtain an idea or meaning from written text. In reading comprehension, the writer can also use their background of knowledge to understand the text from prior knowledge.

### 2.0. Methods

Seeing the problems in the above study, the research uses a qualitative descriptive method in the field of participant observation. The subjects of this study are students from grade eleven of ATPH, a total of 30 students. The data for this study was collected through in-depth interviews and observations, Moreover, the data analysis was collected through three processes namely, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion

#### 2.1 Finding and Discussion

The development of the CIRC method is the shape implementation of curriculum 13 or the scientific approach. As outlined by Ristanto et al. (2020), the Indonesian 2013 curriculum advocates for a scientific approach to education. This approach, aligned with the standards of Indonesian educational processes, emphasizes a series of activities: observing, questioning, experimenting, reasoning, and communicating. These activities are designed to be adapted to the unique characteristics and developmental levels of learners. In line with, Martini (2018) posits that learning through a scientific method or approach has the potential to create an active learning environment and inspire creative and innovative thought processes among students and teacher in

active learning

Charles C. Bonwell and J. An Eison quoted in Warsono & Hariyanto (2017) active learning is a teaching method that focuses on the student's learning process. Another definition is called student-centered learning. In the reading-learning context, the teacher applies one of the active learning strategies, CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition). This implementation method is to create active learning activities in class. So, they worked together to solve the questions from the text. For instance, they can explain difficult words, do group discussions, summarize the material given by the teacher, and present their presentation. On the other hand, they are more responsible for their jobs. So, it brings them up to students' engagement. The CIRC method engages students actively, fosters collaboration, and promotes interaction

According to the observation conducted by research at vocational high school 2 PGRI Kediri, the research found that the teacher has implemented the CIRC method in teaching the reading process in the class. (Marlina: 2019) stated that doing CIRC has several stages: first, a teacher instructs the students. Then, the students are divided into two groups (1) a homogeneous group, and (2) a heterogenous group. Next, the teacher instructed the students on reading and writing skills and tasked them with composing a summary, essay, or product based on their discussion. Fourth, Students researched from different sources discussed their findings in groups, and then presented or practiced what they learned. Fifth, the students were given a quiz. Lastly, they were given a reward for their presentation performance. Prawitaningrum & Endarini (2019) Essentially, the group has been determined as heterogenous in the learning process. It means the students have different abilities in a group to solve problems Prawitaningrum & Endarini (2019). The divided group differently in the learning process creates students building their knowledge (Bien, 2016). When the group discussion has been over, the teacher points to the representative group to present their presentation. So, it brings the students the responsibility in their duty to each other (Mulyadin et al., 2021). So, the implementation of CIRC itself positively impacts the purpose.

In opposite to the situation of the eleventh grade of ATPH with a total of 30 students. The results showed students tend not active and passively. Moreover, the lack of vocabulary and psychological factors caused the reasons in the class. So, it has the sense of being un-active and not conducive

The significant effect implementation of the CIRC method in grade eleventh ATPH Vocational High School PGRI 2 Kediri, has had a positive impact on the student's learning process. The students have become more engaged and proactive in the learning process, shifting the focus away from the teacher and toward the students themselves. The teacher's role has transformed into that of a facilitator, guiding students and ensuring a smooth and effective learning experience. This aligns with the perspective of Warsono & Hariyanto (2017), who emphasize the importance of a teacher's role in active learning as a facilitator. Interviews with teachers further corroborate this positive change, highlighting that the CIRC method has made students learning more dynamic, enjoyable, and student-centered.

Meanwhile, the majority of students of eleventh grade ATPH struggle in learning to read especially in interpreting and understanding the text. those problems are caused by a lack of motivation to learn, low vocabulary, and teaching methods. According to Fitri in Rumahorbo et al. (2021), students' ability to comprehend reading material is influenced by both external and internal factors. External factors include the teacher's teaching style, the curriculum, teaching methods, learning environment, and the availability of reading materials. Internal factors, on the other hand, are related to the student's characteristics, such as reading interest, aptitude, and vocabulary knowledge. In addition to external and internal factors, students' motivation to learn also significantly impacts their ability to comprehend reading material. As stated by Ayu et al. (2019), learning motivation plays a crucial role in the learning process, particularly in influencing student achievement. When students are highly motivated, they tend to be more engaged, interested, and



enthusiastic in understanding texts. Conversely, low motivation can hinder learning achievement and lead to decreased student participation in learning activities, as emphasized by Syaparuddin et al. (2020).

Meanwhile, reading comprehension is the activity of processing, interpreting, and understanding the information in the text. However, this caused the ambiguity in reading comprehension. This is following the view of Maghfirah et al., (2022) which says that reading or sentences that are long, ambiguous, and difficult words can hinder students in the learning process. Therefore, teachers should select reading materials that align with students' ability levels, as suggested by Lisiana et al. (2021) and Mazidatulfizah (2021). One way to address difficulties in reading comprehension is to provide texts that are appropriate to students' understanding levels, thereby encouraging active engagement in reading learning. Therefore, the usage of CIRC method hopes to increase the understanding of students is anticipated that students will improve their ability to comprehend reading texts more effectively and efficiently, making the reading process more enjoyable. Additionally, the teacher hopes that by utilizing the CIRC method, students will master the material and achieve satisfactory grades in reading. Saiful (2018) emphasizes the significance of employing appropriate methods, including in reading, to enhance students' comprehension of reading content.

The results showed from the observation, Students have shown high levels of enthusiasm and satisfaction with the CIRC learning method. The group discussion activities within this method encourage active participation from every student. As the group is divided into one to five members. Each group takes turns narrative text as the reading source given by the teacher. Then, they are given some topics in narrative text to repeatedly read. This purpose is to make all students can think about and understand the contents of the text better. Even though there were variations in the strategies in each group, such as in group 3 and group 4 where one member of the group read repeatedly while the other group members listened more and tried to understand, it still appeared that the learning objective of understanding the contents of the text was achieved. The variety of strategies in each group shows the creativity and flexibility of students in the learning process so that they can find ways that suit their learning styles. Basically, reading is an activity that aims to develop thinking and understanding of meaning, as Sufi said (2008)

According to the interviews conducted with teachers, the research finds that using CIRC makes the students easier to comprehend the concept of the text. As it involves Students actively collaborating within their groups to comprehend the text, assisting each other in deciphering difficult vocabulary, identifying main ideas, constructing sentences, and drawing conclusions. This collaborative approach fosters a shared understanding among all group members. This finding aligns with the research of Adawiyah et al. (2020), which suggests that the CIRC method can boost student motivation. The method's emphasis on group work and peer interaction provides a strong motivational force, encouraging students to learn quickly, and accurately, and achieve positive learning outcomes..

### 3.0 Conclusion

The implementation of the CIRC method in eleventh grade students ATPH at vocational high school PGRI 2 Kediri has been successful. Students have become more engaged and confident in their learning, and the method has effectively addressed their challenges, leading to substantial improvements in their reading and comprehension skills. In conclusion, the CIRC method has demonstrated its effectiveness in addressing reading and understanding challenges. It has enhanced the learning experience and contributed to the development of students' Reading Comprehension skills. To further validate these findings, it is recommended that other researchers conduct comparative studies or empirical tests in different schools and educational levels. This would broaden the scope of understanding and provide a more robust scientific foundation.

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